

The Washington Post

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Mr. Sarbanes's Legacy

In its editorial tribute to the career of Sen. Paul Sarbanes, The Post took a partisan shot at the president and at House Financial Services Committee Chairman Michael G. Oxley (R-Ohio) on corporate accountability.

I find it odd that crafting and successfully passing the first version of the legislation in the House, which eventually became Sarbanes-Oxley, is now described by The Post as an expression of "initial hostility" from Republicans. Ironically, a Feb. 19, 2002, editorial praised Mr. Oxley's version, which I was proud to co-sponsor, as a "promising initiative."

To add further irony, The Post expressed its own hostility toward Sarbanes-Oxley in the Dec. 13, 2004, editorial "Reform Overshoots," when it seemed to question the costs and benefits of the internal controls section of the bill.

It is unfortunate that The Post has such a confused understanding of even its own historical views on this federal legislation. Even more disappointing, though, is that this confusion appears to have been no constraint to the editors' mischaracterization and criticism of the legislative contributions made by the president and the majority party in the House.

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